

C. SAUNDERS.

SELF SERVING STORE.

APPLICATION FILED JUNE 20, 1917.

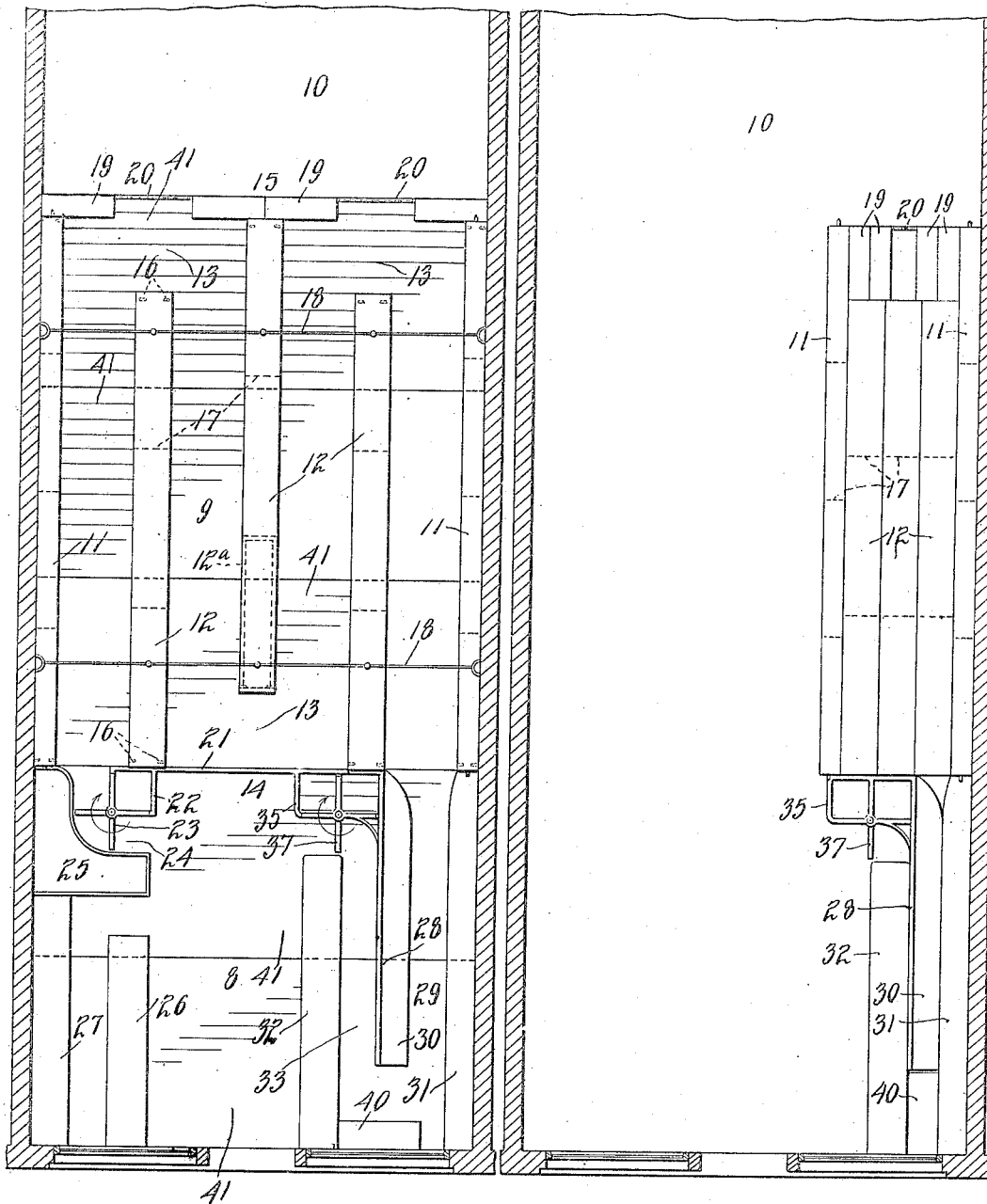
1,397,824.

Patented Nov. 22, 1921.

2 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

Fig. 1.

Fig. 2



Inventor

Clarence Saunders

By

Redford & Doolittle

Attorneys

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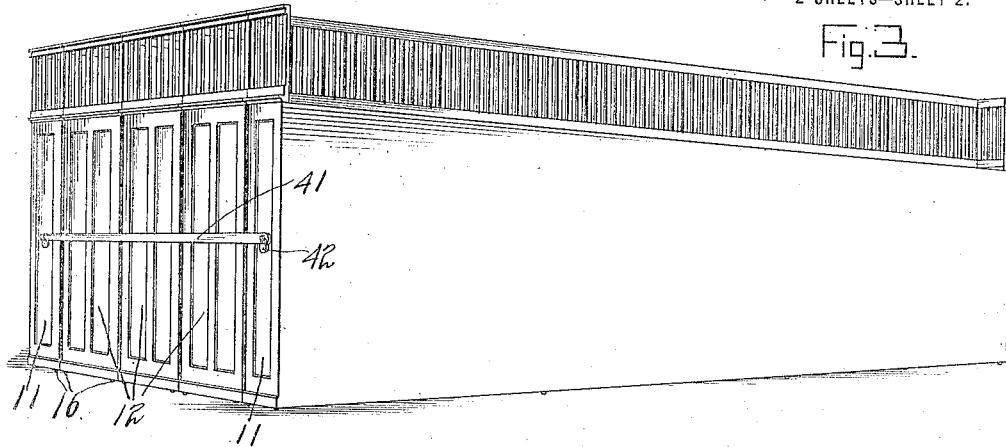


Fig. 3.

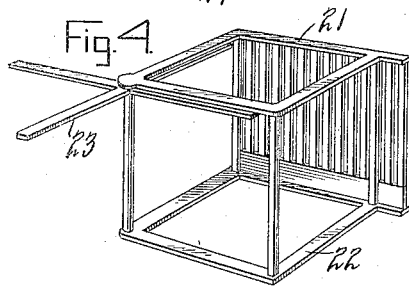


Fig. 4.

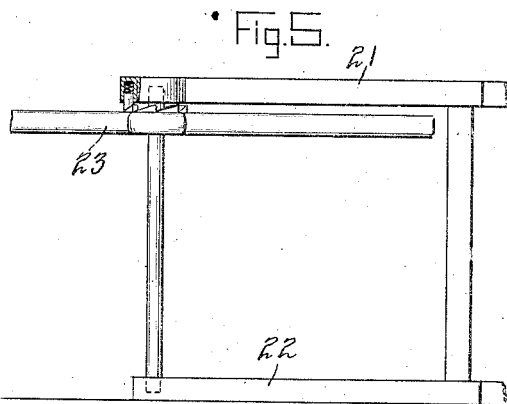


Fig. 5.

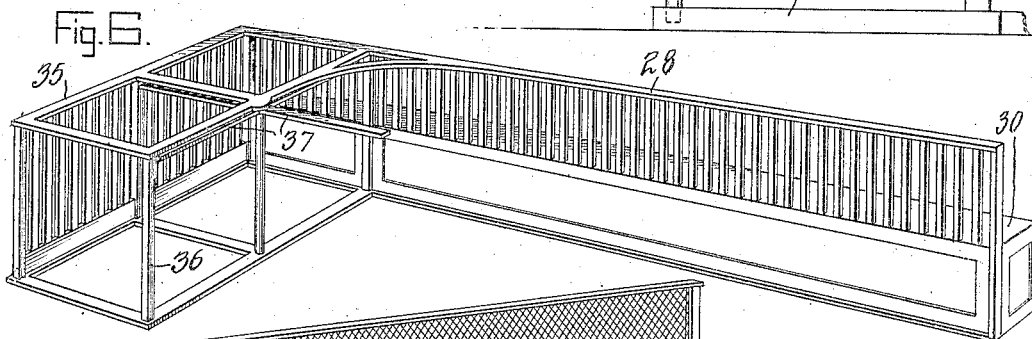


Fig. 6.

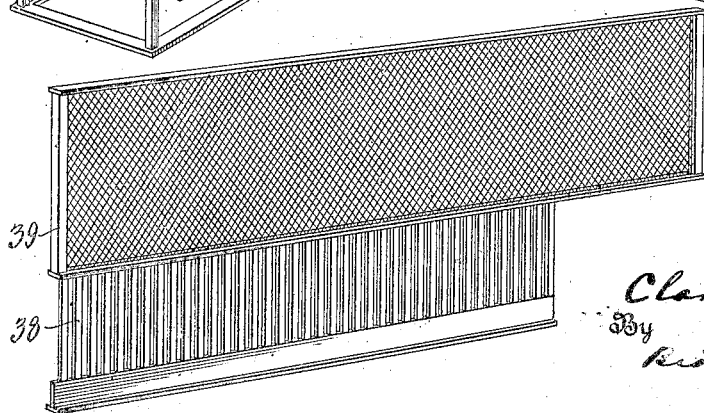


Fig. 7.

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# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

CLARENCE SAUNDERS, OF MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE, ASSIGNOR TO PIGGLY WIGGLY CORPORATION, OF MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE, A CORPORATION OF DELAWARE.

## SELF-SERVING STORE.

1,397,824.

Specification of Letters Patent.

Patented Nov. 22, 1921.

Application filed June 20, 1917. Serial No. 175,942.

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, CLARENCE SAUNDERS, a citizen of the United States, residing at Memphis, Shelby county, and State of Tennessee, have invented and discovered certain new and useful Improvements in Self-Serving Stores, of which the following is a specification.

My said invention relates to store equipment or furniture and a system for arranging the same, and consists in the combination and arrangements of elements hereinafter described and particularly set forth in the accompanying claims.

The purpose of the invention is to provide store furniture in the form of portable units adapted to be readily arranged for use or collapsed for shipping or closing purposes, the same being designed for use in a store room, or other place, and to be arranged in such a manner that the customers will be enabled to serve themselves and, in doing so, will be required to review the entire assortment of goods carried in stock, conveniently and attractively displayed, and after selecting the goods desired, will be required to pass a checking and paying station at which the goods selected may be billed, wrapped and settled for before leaving the premises.

The invention is a further development of my invention relating to self-serving stores, as disclosed in my U. S. Patent No. 1,242,872 of October 9, 1917; and which is characterized in that the store furniture is in the nature of permanent fixtures, and the operation of which system thus disclosed is highly efficient and satisfactory as particularly set forth in the record of said application.

The store furniture disclosed in the present application is characterized in that the same is made up of standardized units, whereby stores adopting the system may be equipped with portable units readily set up for business and disassembled or collapsed as occasion requires, and wherein the units themselves may be constructed at a central point and all after the same pattern in construction and appearance, insuring a uniformity of stores employing my invention.

The accompanying drawings, on which similar reference characters indicate corresponding parts, illustrate an arrangement of

store equipment and furniture erected and assembled after the manner herein proposed. In said drawings:

Figure 1 is a top plan view illustrating the interior of a store, arranged and equipped in accordance with my invention;

Fig. 2 a similar view showing the units or parts in collapsed relation;

Fig. 3 a perspective view of the collapsed furniture units, closed and locked;

Fig. 4 a detail perspective view of the entrance turnstile unit;

Fig. 5 an elevational view of said turnstile unit;

Fig. 6 a perspective view of the exit turnstile unit and connected counter, and

Fig. 7 a perspective view of the front partition or section.

Referring to the construction in further detail, the store consists of a room or other space providing a lobby 8 (forming an entrance and exit) at the front; a sales department 9, in the middle; and a supply or stock room 10 at the rear of the building, all proportioned with regard to the size of the store and the particular kind of business for which it is designed.

The sales department 9 has two rows of merchandise display cabinets or holders 11, adapted to be arranged against the side walls of the room, and intermediate of these a series of display cabinets 12. Said cabinets 12 are constructed with shelves on opposite sides and are arranged in the room in line with and spaced from each other and have their respective alternate ends disposed in a manner to provide passage-ways 13. The spaces between the cabinets form aisles 14, which, with said passage-ways 13, form a circuitous path between the respective rows of shelving or cabinets 11 and 12 from the entrance 24 to the exit 33. This circuitous path must be traversed by every purchaser who enters the salesroom and, while following this path, the customer has displayed before him for selection the varied items in the stock of goods that are offered for sale.

The lobby 8 and store-room 10 are divided off from the sales-room 9 by a front partition 14 and a rear partition 15, thereby obtaining the barriers necessary to the successful operation of the system. This arrangement of store furniture is in principle the same as

that disclosed in my co-pending application above referred to and the proposed manner of operating the system is likewise similar.

In the present instance, the cabinets or holders 11 and 12 are constructed as independent units, and are mounted on rollers or casters 16, whereby the same may be readily moved into position, as indicated in Fig. 1, or collapsed within a restricted space as shown in Fig. 2. The end section 12<sup>a</sup> of the middle cabinet or shelving 12 is constructed as a refrigerator, and said refrigerator constitutes an independent unit and is mounted on rollers to be readily moved into and out of position. Said cabinet sections 11 and 12 may be constructed in smaller units, if preferred, and assembled in alinement or end for end as at 17, and in lieu of mounting the cabinet sections directly on the rollers or casters, said sections may be set in wheeled trays or platform trucks to be moved about as desired. In setting up the cabinet units for use, *i. e.*, for the store service, the same are adapted to be held and braced in position by means of the rods 18 disposed transversely of the store-room and secured to the tops of the cabinets and the side-walls of the store by any suitable fastening devices.

The rear partition 15 is made up of display cabinets or shelving units 19 disposed preferably against the side walls of the store, and end to end against the middle row of cabinets 12, and the spaces between said cabinets 19 are closed by the partitioning screen sections or panels 20, readily mounted upon and secured to the cabinet sections 19 as shown.

The front partition 14 is made up from a section 21, constructed after the manner of a fence, see Fig. 4, and having a frame section 22 supporting a turnstile 23, that controls the entrance passage-way 24. To the left of this entrance there is a counter or display cabinet 25 utilized to hold the baskets or other receptacles with which the entering customers are provided for carrying the selections of goods that they will make.

Another cabinet construction of shelving or merchandise holders 26 and 27 is located at the front on the one side of the lobby 8, to provide a fruit department, or this space may be utilized as a meat department, or for any other desired purpose as will be understood.

The space to the right of the lobby 8, as one enters the store, is utilized as the checking and settling department of the store, and consists of a partition of fence structure 28 providing an aisle 29 that communicates with the exit end of the last aisle of the circuitous path. Said partition has a shelf 30 along its side at a convenient height, which may be utilized by customers for resting

their baskets while the purchases of those in advance are being checked up, wrapped and paid for. Another basket-resting shelf 31 is provided along the front end of the aisle, adjacent the side wall of the store, as shown. A relatively long counter or table 32 is located adjacent the partition 28 and therewith forms the exit aisle 33 that communicates with the outlet aisle 29 of the circuitous path.

The partition fence and shelf structure (28 and 30) has formed continuous therewith a fence structure 35, and frame 36 (see Fig. 6), and an exit turnstile 37 is mounted in said frame 36 as shown. The turnstile 37 coöperates with the end of the counter 32 to give the necessary restriction that allows the customers to pass out one by one. A fence and screen unit (38 and 39) completes the front partition 14, and is set up to connect the entrance and exit turnstile supporting frames after the manner shown in Fig. 1.

By having the front partitioning structure of the store constructed as a screen, it will be obvious that the interior of the sales-room and the goods on sale therein will be displayed from the lobby 8, and by this screen construction any purchaser within the sales-room may readily make inquiries of the attendants in the lobby as to the location of certain articles and other information pertaining to the same.

The several units of furniture located within the storeroom, *i. e.* the counters, shelving and turnstiles, are adapted to be constructed in standard dimensions, and when not in use are intended to be collapsed to one side and at the front of the store-room after the manner indicated in Fig. 2. Thus, the units 25, 23, 26, 27 and (38 and 39) are placed on top of the units 31, 30, 32 and 40. These portable units are also preferably mounted on rollers or frames provided with rollers so as to be readily moved about from place to place.

The invention further contemplates the employment of flooring 41 made up in sections to be readily laid or removed, and with this provision the store is adapted to be set up in a tent or other temporary inclosure. The flooring may be made of any appropriate material and the sections of such sizes as to be readily handled, and the whole apparatus, when knocked down or collapsed, is adapted to be held together by means of a pair of locking bars 42 disposed at either end of the units and secured by the padlocks 43 (see Fig. 3).

It will therefore be seen from the foregoing that these fixtures or cabinets may be made in standard lengths of approximately thirty feet, and the fencing and partitions of commensurate sizes. The number of parts necessary for a complete store may be then forwarded to the location and there

erected in accordance with proper specifications and secured to the floor by the fastening means 18 and other appropriate devices. The units may be readily disassembled and  
 5 collapsed to one side of the store-room and there covered by a suitable canvas, tarpaulin or other appropriate covering means.

I have used the term "display units" in the claims as a generic term to designate the  
 10 parts 12 or other component elements and also to indicate other structures having equivalent functions in forming the circuitous path for customers. Instances of such structures are found in the partitions  
 15 used in various forms in the Piggly Wiggly stores, one form of such partitions being also shown in my co-pending application No. 202,466, filed November 17, 1917.

It is obvious that those skilled in the art  
 20 may vary the details of construction and arrangement of parts without departing from the spirit of my invention, and therefore I do not wish to be limited to such features except as may be required by the  
 25 claims.

Having thus fully described my said invention what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is:

1. In a store for vending merchandise, a  
 30 plurality of display units normally freely movable and adapted to be arranged to form a single circuitous path for customers, the outer units having blank outer faces, all the units of the store being adapted for ar-  
 35 rangement in contact with each other to form a store unit closed on all sides, and bars extending across the ends of said closed unit for locking the whole together.

2. In a store for vending merchandise, a  
 40 set of display units adapted to be arranged parallel to each other and fastened in place, a set of display units adapted to be arranged at the sides of the store and having blank outer sides, said units being longer than  
 45 those first named, a third set of short-length display units adapted to be arranged at the end of the store, said sets of display units forming a single circuitous path for customers and being freely movable on the  
 50 floor, and all of said units being adapted to be arranged in rows of equal length with the units of the first and third sets standing end to end between those of the second set,

and means for locking the store units together at the ends, substantially as set forth. 55

3. An apparatus for the vending of merchandise having a series of display units arranged parallel to each other with spaces between them to form aisles and with the ends of alternate cabinets spaced from the  
 60 wall or partition of the store, whereby a circuitous path is provided through which the customers must pass from the entrance to the exit, said units being freely movable on the floor, fixed positioning devices ex-  
 65 tending transversely across the tops of said units adjacent their ends, and means for fastening the display units to said devices, substantially as set forth.

4. An apparatus for the vending of merchandise having a series of freely movable display units arranged parallel to each other and with spaces between them to form aisles and with the ends of alternate cabinets spaced from the wall or partition of  
 75 the store, whereby a circuitous path is provided for the passage of customers from the entrance to the exit, one-way turnstiles at the entrance and exit of said passage, and supporting frames for the turnstiles freely  
 80 movable on the floor, substantially as set forth.

5. An apparatus for the vending of merchandise having a series of freely movable display units arranged parallel to each other  
 85 and with spaces between them to form aisles and with the ends of alternate cabinets spaced from the wall or partition of the store, whereby a circuitous path is provided for the passage of customers from the en-  
 90 trance to the exit, a movable one-way turnstile at the entrance to said path, and checking and settlement devices at the exit including a store unit formed as a single movable device and comprising a turnstile, a  
 95 frame for the turnstile, a length of fencing and a basket rest, substantially as set forth.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal at Washington, District of Columbia, this thirtieth day of May, 105  
 A. D. nineteen hundred and seventeen.

CLARENCE SAUNDERS. [L. s.]

Witnesses:

E. W. BRADFORD,  
 JOHN M. FARLEY.